



Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

FIND YOUR
PARK

Newsletter

Grab Your Passport and Go!

Pick Up your Passport to the Blackstone River Valley!



The warm weather is here so it's time to get out and explore Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. A great way to do this is to pick up a free Blackstone Valley passport book and collect stamps from all six park areas. For more information about the program including passport and cancellation stamp locations, please visit nps.gov/blrv/planyourvisit/passport.htm

The passport is also available as a special pull out section in Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc.'s new *Get Lost Guide* which can be picked up at our shared office or found online at blackstoneheritagecorridor.org



What's Happening in the Park?

Caring for Our Natural Resources



The Blackstone River Coalition (BRC), a diverse group of organizations founded in 2000, just launched their 14th season of monitoring the water quality of the Blackstone River. Volunteers collect samples of the river and its tributaries each month to track the

condition of the waterways. This program is the cornerstone of BRC's campaign to make the Blackstone River fishable and swimmable. To learn more about the BRC and their efforts to restore the Blackstone, visit zaptheblackstone.org



Blackstone River Valley
National Historical Park
staff can be contacted at the
following partner locations:

Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc.
670 Linwood Avenue
Whitinsville, MA 01588
401-595-8394

Slater Mill Historic Site
67 Roosevelt Avenue
Pawtucket, RI 02860
401-428-3816

nps.gov/BLRV
fb.com/BlackstoneNPS
blrv_info@nps.gov

Meghan Kish
Superintendent

New Faces at the Park



Emma Schlam graduated in 2016 with a degree in Geoscience from Smith College. Her interest in community and environment led her to Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park as an AmeriCorps VISTA member. She is glad for the opportunity to work with both the government and non-profit aspects of public engagement and is excited to help strengthen and build connections between valley communities and the deep history at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park.



Nicholas J. Moore graduated from Penn State University's Wildlife and Fisheries Science program in 2014 and has just returned to the east coast after serving as an NPS trail crew intern in California. What excites him the most about working at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is that the history of the region goes back further than all of the other places he's worked across the country put together. As a member of the park's maintenance crew, he looks forward to maintaining the natural landscape for visitor access, protecting and preserving the historic buildings and creating a safe experience for visitors.

Connecting with Communities

Blackstone Half Marathon

The Blackstone Valley Half Marathon and 5K races took place on April 23, with over 600 runners competing in the two events. The races start at Slater Mill in Pawtucket, RI and the half marathon course goes to the Blackstone River State Park before returning

to the starting line via the Blackstone River Bikeway. Park staff was on hand to provide information about the park. Congratulations to everyone, including our NPS colleague Josh Boles, who competed in this great event.



Earth Day in the Blackstone Valley

Our thanks to all of the volunteers who came out to the numerous clean up events that were held up and down the Blackstone Valley on Earth Day weekend. Care and maintenance of the valley's historic resources and natural landscapes is a year round effort. Please get in touch to find out how you can help at our next event!



Spend your Summer in the Blackstone Valley

Summer is a great time to explore the Blackstone River Valley. Go on a walk, pedal a bike on the bikepath, paddle a canoe down the river, or take in the wonder of the nighttime sky. Park staff, volunteers, and partners are offering free, hands-on programs throughout the summer and into the fall. There is so much to do. What are you waiting for? Let's get outside!

Take a Walk with Us!



Join us this summer every Thursday evening from June 1 to August 31 for our very popular Ranger Walkabout Series. All programs begin at 6:30 PM and are free and open to the public. Walkabouts take place across the valley and highlight the people, places, and stories connected to the region's industrial heritage.

Seventeen Saturdays of Summer Fun!

Join us for Seventeen Summer Saturdays and explore your national park! Saturdays between June 3 and September 30, park staff, volunteers and community partners will offer free, hands-on and family-friendly programs focused on the history, culture and nature of the Blackstone River Valley. Programs, unless noted otherwise, will take place from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.



Explore the Night Sky!



Come and explore the wonders of the night sky at our partner site Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge, MA with help from members of the Civil Air Patrol. Events include stargazing and a chance for kids to earn their Night Explorer Junior Ranger badge. Bring a flashlight or headlamp

(preferably with a red light for better night sky observation) and dress for the weather. All night sky events are free and open to the public. Parking is in the River Bend Farm Visitor Center parking lot at 287 Oak Street, Uxbridge, MA. Staff and volunteers will be on hand to safely direct you to the viewing site.

June 16 - River Bend Farm
At 9:00 PM

July 14 - River Bend Farm
At 9:00 PM

August 11 - River Bend Farm
At 8:30 PM

September 15 - River Bend Farm
At 7:30 PM

October 20 - River Bend Farm
At 6:30 PM

For more information about the park and our public programs, including cancellations due to weather, please check the park's website nps.gov/BLRV and facebook page at fb.com/BlackstoneNPS.

GO! and Get Lost in the Blackstone River Valley

Our partner Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc. is making your adventure planning easy by offering two great ways to help you explore the Blackstone Valley this summer and fall. The new *Get Lost Guide* highlights attractions and visitor services

in the 25 cities and towns that make up the national heritage corridor. The Corridor's GO! program includes a month's worth of free events offered by partners across the valley in September. For information on these programs, please visit blackstoneheritagecorridor.org



Partner Spotlight

William Murray - Mayor, Cumberland RI



What does it mean to you to have the Ashton Village section of Cumberland as part of the new national historical park?

It is an honor that Ashton Village is being recognized by Congress and the National Park Service. Ashton Village is a remarkable example of adaptively reusing historic properties. The Ashton Mill Company is now condominiums and the mill housing is now an affordable and below market residences. I hope that visitors

will be interested in how our generation shows its appreciation for its history by infusing new life and purpose into its nineteenth century buildings and landscapes.

What's the buzz around town about the national historical park?

There is a strong historic preservation ethic in Cumberland. We have eight local historic districts. Our citizens, especially our schoolchildren, are eager to learn what Ashton Village's role will be in telling the new park's story. We are also pleased that the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission just approved our grant request to create historic preservation design guidelines for Ashton Village. This project stands to

draw more attention to the village's architectural qualities.

What will Cumberland look like in five years because of the partnership with the National Park Service?

My hope is that Cumberland distinguishes itself in its presentation and interpretation of the historical transformations of the Blackstone River Valley. Not only is it the story of the Industrial Revolution, but also of depression, suburbanization, the river's environmental neglect and recovery, periodic floods, and more. I expect that Ashton Village's story will generate great interest and visitation. This should be very good for our economy and our sense of why the Blackstone River Valley is such a special place.

Volunteer Call to Action

Join Our Amazing Volunteer Crew!



If you are interested in volunteering with the park this coming season to help us preserve, protect, and interpret the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources of the park, please contact: Josh Bell at Joshua_Bell@nps.gov or Suzanne Buchanan at Sbuchanan@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org



Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteer Linda Hixon



Linda is an adjunct Professor of History at Worcester State University. In the past year, she has co-lead a walkabout on the Hopedale women's sewing circle, a tour on spiritualism, and participated in a panel discussion on women's equality. She is currently working on a

community project to gather information on 150 years of women's history in the town of Hopedale. Linda's deep knowledge of local history and passion for telling the untold stories of Hopedale make her an invaluable resource. Look for Linda in the northern part of the valley this summer!